

LECTURES ON THE METHODOLOGY OF CLINICAL RESEARCH. By Max Hamilton, M.D., D.P.M. (Pp. viii+139. 21s.) Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd., 1961.

THIS book is based on twelve lectures designed to give the beginner in clinical research an insight into the basis of experimental design. There is no attempt to explain statistical methods in detail but the principal statistical techniques available are described. The choice of material is good and the book succeeds in presenting a balanced picture of the problems of clinical research. Any beginner in this field would profit by reading it. G. M. B.

GREAT IDEAS IN THE HISTORY OF SURGERY. By Leo M. Zimmerman and Ilza Veith. (Pp. 587; figs. 83. 120s.) London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox, 1961.

THERE are few books devoted to the history of surgery and fewer still that are written with understanding. A surgeon and a historian, both from the University of Chicago, have collaborated in the writing of this one and have produced an attractive and scholarly work. They trace their story from the earliest known papyrus of Ancient Egypt to the beginning of the present century and concentrate on the lives, ideas and achievements of some fifty surgical pioneers. They present the growth of surgical thought and practice in its true perspective by outlining the background of general history and the state of general medicine during the lifetime of each of their subjects, and they stress the interdependence of all branches of learning. Long and informative abstracts from original surgical writings and numerous illustrations bring the whole saga to life.

All the well-known names in surgical history are here—Hippocrates, Vesalius, Paré, Pott, Hunter, Scarpa, Cooper, Dupuytren, Sims, Lister and many more. The beginnings of the modern, post-Listerian period are described particularly well—Bassini and hernia, Billroth and adominal surgery, Kocher and the surgery of the endocrine glands, Horsley and neurological surgery, Sauerbruch and thoracic surgery. A further chapter on Hugh Owen Thomas and Orthopaedic surgery might not have been out of place.

The book is expensive, but it is excellent value and well produced. It should be available in all surgical libraries and would be welcomed by any surgeon, who received it as a gift.

R. B. W.

THE WILL TO HEALTH. By Harley Williams. (Pp. 140. 12s. 6d.) London: Museum Press Limited, 1962.

DR. Harley Williams is well-known as a writer on the philosophical and historical aspects of medicine.

This book has been written for the layman and has nothing to do with the complex and interminable techniques of modern medicine. The impulse to write it came from a chance remark of Lord Horder, who said: "Throughout the ages many human individuals have enjoyed perfect health—with no aid whatever from medicine."

The author says: "Much of modern medicine comes too late, and only when we are ill do we realize the disconcerting truth that much of the effort needed for cure, and nearly all the effort required in prevention, depends upon us." This personal interest and energy he calls the will to health.

As a prime requirement for the maintenance of health he postulates the possession of a "faith," using the term in a wide sense, not necessarily religious. He deals with the subjects of stress and tension in life, the use and abuse of exercise, food and alcohol, how to face an operation or retirement, how "to travel healthily and arrive."

The book presents a way of life rather than a striving after health for its own sake, and as such it should be helpful to those thoughtful people who would endeavour to walk in this way.

W. G. F.